

SENATE BILL 717  
By Southerland

AN ACT to name a segment of the State Route 70 By-Pass in Greeneville in honor of the late Representative Joseph "Joe" Bewley.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should permanently commemorate the accomplishments of those statesmen who served this State with the greatest acumen and dedication; and

WHEREAS, the late Representative Joseph Leslie "Joe" Bewley was a well-rounded gentleman who had served astutely in the diverse worlds of business, politics, and government; and

WHEREAS, throughout his illustrious tenure in the General Assembly, Representative Bewley served his constituents in the 8th House District and all other citizens of Tennessee with the utmost professionalism, probity, and integrity; and

WHEREAS, Joe Bewley served the good people of Greeneville and Greene County for sixteen years as a member of the Tennessee House of Representatives, always working with purpose and conviction to establish a brighter future for his fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, a direct descendant of Jacob Bewley, a State Senator in 1835 and close friend of and advisor to Andrew Johnson, Joe Bewley was born November 28, 1922 in Greene County to the late French Leslie and Mary Ayers Bewley; he graduated from Greeneville High School and attended Tusculum College and The Citadel, in Charleston South Carolina; and

WHEREAS, answering the call of his country to military service, Mr. Bewley enlisted in the United States Army Air Corps and served valiantly as a pilot during World War II; and

WHEREAS, following his military service, Joe Bewley returned to Greeneville to work for, and later to become the owner of, Bewley Chevrolet Company for the next 26 years; he

served as president of the Greene County New Automobile Dealers Association and director of the Tennessee Automobile Dealers Association; and

WHEREAS, besides his love of hunting and fishing, Mr. Bewley's great passion was civilian aviation, and he was instrumental in the design, development, and building of the Greeneville Airport; this enthusiasm for flying led several of his family members to pursue careers in professional aviation; and

WHEREAS, Joe Bewley was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; he served as president of the Greeneville Chamber of Commerce, president of the Greeneville Rotary Club, chairman of the Greeneville-Greene County Airport Authority, member of the Elk and Moose lodges, member of Greeneville Lodge #3, F&AM, and a member of the Republican Party. His first elective office was Greene County Water Commissioner; and

WHEREAS, on November 7, 1972, voters in Greene and Cocke Counties elected Mr. Bewley to the first of eight terms in the Tennessee House of Representatives; during his tenure he served astutely as a member of the Transportation, Conservation and Environment, and Finance, Ways and Means Committees, as well as the Fiscal Review Committee; and

WHEREAS, as a legislator, Joe Bewley was known for his ability to defuse tense moments by restoring good humor with a deft humorous remark; his sometimes pointed comments were delivered from a background of love and humanity, a sense of comradery, and a willingness to include himself within the target; and

WHEREAS, his physical stature, silver hair and penchant for song complimented an inner spirit of stability, generosity and kindness which endeared him to all members and staff of the General Assembly; to engage him in conversation was to experience his keen wit, warmth and humanity; and

WHEREAS, Joe Bewley was an active and devout member of the Asbury United Methodist Church, which he served faithfully for many years as Chairman of the Pastor-Parish

Committee, Chairman of the Administrative Board, member of the Board of Trustees and president of the LaRue Bible Sunday School Class; and

WHEREAS, Joe Bewley played an important role in making Tennessee an even better place to live, and his bountiful life of purpose and commitment should be permanently commemorated by his former colleagues; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, that segment of the State Route 70 By-Pass from such route's intersection with Summer Street in Greeneville, Greene County to its intersection with West Main Street is hereby designated the "Joseph "Joe" Bewley Memorial Highway" as a lasting tribute to one of the most outstanding citizens and public servants this State has ever produced.

SECTION 2. The department of transportation is directed to erect suitable signs or to affix suitable markers designating the segment of the State Route 70 By-Pass described in Section 1 as the "Joseph "Joe" Bewley Memorial Highway".

SECTION 3. The erection of such signs shall be within the guidelines prescribed by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

SECTION 4. This act shall become operative only if the federal highway administrator advises the commissioner of transportation in writing that the provisions of this resolution shall not render Tennessee in violation of federal laws and regulations and subject to penalties prescribed therein.

SECTION 5. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.